



NRC NEWS

U. S. NUCLEAR REGULATORY COMMISSION

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No. III-03-048

July 11, 2003

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NRC STAFF PROPOSES \$5,500 FINE AGAINST AN OHIO INSPECTION COMPANY

The Nuclear Regulatory Commission staff has proposed a \$5,500 fine against Testmaster Inspection Company, Inc., of Perrysburg, Ohio for violations of NRC safety requirements in its radiography work.

Radiography is a non-destructive testing method which uses a sealed radiation source to make x-ray like images of heavy metal objects, like pumps, valves and pipes.

During an investigation conducted between June, 2002, and March, 2003, the NRC's Office of Investigations found that a radiographer employed by the company deliberately failed to perform required surveys of the radiographic exposure device following each exposure, in violation of NRC requirements. A survey of a radiographic exposure device must be performed after every exposure to determine whether the sealed radiation source has returned to the proper shielded position.

The investigation looked into allegations of employment discrimination by the company in connection with NRC-licensed activities. The results of this investigation did not substantiate those allegations, but uncovered that a radiographer and a radiographer's assistant performing radiography in Huntington, Indiana, on October 24-25, 2000, continued using the radiography device after realizing that the instrument they were using to survey the device operated intermittently.

Even though this violation did not result in overexposure to members of the public or the radiographers, it increased the potential for unnecessary radiation exposure.

The individual contributing to the violation no longer works for the company and the company provided other employees with additional training on required procedures for using radiography equipment.

The company has 30 days from receipt of the letter to either pay the civil penalty or to challenge the proposed fine. If the fine is protested and subsequently imposed by the NRC staff, the company may request a hearing.

The NRC's notice of violation and its enclosures can be viewed at the NRC's web site:
<http://www.nrc.gov/what-we-do/regulatory/enforcement/current.html#materials>.

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